

## ABSTRACT

The image of a pattern of reticle 12 is, being illuminated with exposure light IL of vacuum ultraviolet range, projected, via projection optical system PL, onto wafer 17a on wafer stage 18a in wafer chamber 24. By providing gas blowing plate 15 in which aperture portion 15a for the exposure light optical path is provided between projection optical system PL and wafer 17a, exhausting a gas in the first space S1 over gas blowing plate 15 via exhaust port G1e, purifying the exhausted gas, and then by blowing the purified gas again into space S1 via gas supply port G1i, outgases from wafer 17a are efficiently exhausted. Into the second space S2 under gas blowing plate 15 is supplied a gas of which contamination degree of impurities is controlled to be more relaxed compared with the gas in the first space S1.

By this, even when using vacuum ultraviolet light as exposure light, with the decrease of transmittance on the optical path being controlled, a high exposure light intensity can be obtained.